ready for the consideration of Government. Representations have often been made in this Assembly for the establishment of new police outposts and for the strengthening of staff in particular places. Government felt that the question should not be dealt with piecemeal but required a comprehensive study. An experienced officer of the department was accordingly deputed to examine the entire question of allocation.

Registration of Assurances.

15. You will see from the report of the Department of Registration that the pieces of social legislation affecting the Nair, the Ezhava and the Nanjinad Vellala communities, have brought about a considerable number of partitions of the property of long established joint families. There were, up to the end of 1103, 27,054 partition deeds of property to the value of Rs. 4·08 crores among Nairs. The corresponding figures were 8,888 for Rs. 1·15 crores among Ezhavas and 558 for Rs. 28·39 lakhs among Nanjinad Vellalas.

Joint Stock Companies.

16. The year witnessed a boom in company promotion. Eighty-five companies were registered during the year, of which 66 conducted banking and loan transactions. This is the largest number of banks on record started in any one particular year and their authorised capital was Rs. 96 lakhs. It is significant that the majority of these conducted *chitties*. It remains to be seen whether this rapid growth of small banking concerns is healthy and sound economically. The question of closer control over *chitties*, by revising the existing law on the subject, is engaging my attention.

Co-operative Societies.

17. The co-operative movement continues to spread. The number of societies increased from 1,555 to 1,688; the number of members from 150,932 to 177,824; and the working capital from Rs. 33·63 lakhs to Rs. 42·59 lakhs. The majority of these societies continued to do credit business alone. The number of societies of the backward and depressed classes has also increased with a corresponding increase in the number of members and in the amount of working capital. It is noteworthy that there are 3 societies whose membership is confined to women alone and that the total number of women members in all the societies together rose from 15,687 in 1102 to 19,507 in 1103. The growing popularity of the movement among women is full of promise for the good of the country. The time has come for a thorough examination of the working of co-operative societies in the State so as to guide it on sound and healthy lines calculated to help the economic rehabilitation of the masses.

Public Works.

18. The total expenditure incurred by the Public Works Department during 1103 was Rs. 37·45 lakhs, of which communications absorbed Rs. 21·54 lakhs and buildings Rs. 6·80 lakhs. The expenditure on buildings was the highest on record during the past quinquennium.

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